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## Editorial.

### DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES.

It is sometimes asked why nurses in Great Britain are behind those of other nations in the matter of organisation, and are difficult to rouse to take an active interest in this branch of their professional work although they see the necessity for it.

To be quite truthful the answer is to be found in the imperfect general education of the average English woman combined with her deep felt and warm emotions. She is tender hearted, pitiful, and unsparing in her sacrifice of herself where her heart and sympathies are touched, and she is so absorbed in her actual work for her patients, so conscious that she is expending on them all her energies, that she thinks it is almost unreasonable to ask her to take an active interest in anything which affects herself, forgetting that as one of a community such an attitude injures others. Her daily work occupies her hands and satisfies her heart. Outside the sick room the average nurse does not realise any duty which touches her profession.

The best method of persuading the practical nurse to take her share in organisation work is to get her to realise that nothing will help more to lessen unnecessary human suffering than the effective result of such work.

The English nurse may trust her instincts where devotion to the sick is concerned, she is not likely to fail there; but she should take care that her heart is not cultivated at the expense of her head. If both are not well balanced in the part which they take in the performance of her work it will not reach that degree of perfection which is her constant aim.

We would therefore impress upon nurses that for the welfare of their patients it is

incumbent on them to take a share in what appear to them to be dry details of organisation.

For instance, the skilled superintendence of the Sister may ensure that every patient in the ward under her charge is thoroughly well nursed. She is desirous that the same efficient care should be extended to the sick wherever they may be.

The only means to attain this is by ensuring an efficient education to all nurses, and this again is only possible by the definition of a standard, under State authority, which must be attained by all who desire to rank as professional nurses.

Therefore the nurse who is most tender-hearted, where her patients are concerned, is the one who should take the deepest interest in nursing politics and work the hardest for the State Registration of Trained Nurses. By so doing she will help to bring to a large number of patients the same devoted care which she bestows upon the sick to whom she personally attends. If this means for her that she must spend part of her leisure time in studying the registration movement, this is a sacrifice she can make on behalf of the sick to whom her life is devoted, and whose welfare she has so keenly at heart.

It is only demanded of the few that they should give up entirely a life of practical service of the sick, which, by common consent, is held to be the happiest and most satisfying that any woman can live, and devote themselves to the drier details of organisation. Those who have the happiness of spending their days as practical nurses, and in touch with all the human interest this brings may well spare a small portion of their time to furthering the general welfare of their profession, membership of which entails duties as well as privileges.

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